

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6184

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG,CG

SUBJECT: POL SITUATION IN ZAIRE

1. MOBIL REP DEBRULE JANUARY 23 GAVE EMBOFF FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING ZAIRIAN POL SITUATION: POL STOCKS AS OF JANUARY 23 ARE SUFFICIENT FOR APPROXIMATELY 20 DAYS. HOWEVER, ACUTE SHORTAGE IS LIKELY DEVELOP AT END OF SUCH TIME BECAUSE OF COMBINATION OF FACTORS: (A) LOCAL REFINERY PRODUCES SURPLUS FUEL OIL WHICH MUST BE EXPORTED. AS PETROZAIRE DID NOT CHARTER EMPTY TANKER TO REMOVE FUEL OIL IN SUFFICIENT TIME, REFINERY WAS CLOSED JANUARY 16 BECAUSE ALL AVAILABLE TANKS WERE FILLED WITH FUEL OIL. (B) BOTH INCOMING AND OUTGOING TANKERS MUST UNLOAD OR OFFLOAD APPROXIMATELY 1/4 OF THEIR CARGO ONTO BARGES BECAUSE OF DEPTH OF RIVER AT REFINERY SITE. THIS IS ORDINARILY ACCOMPLISHED BY USING THREE BARGES AND TWO TUGS. ONE OF TWO TUGS WAS ACCIDENTALLY DESTROYED BY FIRE APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK AGO, REMAINING TUG CAN OPERATE THREE BARGES BUT AT GREATLY REDUCED SPEED. (C) EMPTY TANKER TO PICK UP FUEL OIL IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE WITHIN NEXT SEVERAL DAYS AT APPROXIMATELY SAME TIME WHICH A TANKER OF PRODUCTS IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE UNDER NORMAL SITUATION, COMBINATION OF TWO VEHICLES ARRIVING AT SAME TIME WOULD PRESENT PROBLEM BUT PROBLEM WILL BE GREATLY INCREASED UNDER PRESENT

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CIRCUMSTANCES.

2. DEBRULE CONCLUDED BY STATING THAT IT IS THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE THAT UNLOADING AND OFFLOADING OF FUEL OIL AND REFINED PRODUCTS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO PREVENT ACUTE SHORTAGE POL PRODUCTS. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT AS IDEAL CONDITIONS ALMOST NEVER OCCUR IN ZAIRE, IT IS ALMOST INEVITABLE THAT THERE WILL BE AT LEAST A TEMPORARY SHORTAGE OF POL PRODUCTS IN KINSHASA AREA BEGINNING IN APPROXIMATELY 20 DAYS WHEN CURRENT STOCKS ARE EXHAUSTED.

CUTLER

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